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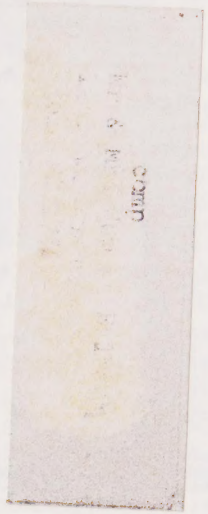

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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

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VOL. 12 NO. 16
SEPTEMBER 1982
ISSUE NO. 252

LETTERS

In "The Panic Box" in RTN 250, one item reads: "5-16 PIONEER #25(14) derailed one wheel of engine 225 at Cobb ID due to broken axle; train terminated at LaGrande, psgrs bused on; delay 2:15."

This is inaccurate and incomplete. The train was NOT terminated at LaGrande. The derailment occurred a few miles east of Baker, Oregon. My wife and I were passengers on that train. Eventually a UP freight engine was substituted for Amtrak No. 225. When we passed Baker with the UP engine we were approximately four hours late.

Soon after, the conductor came thru the train asking passengers if they wished to be bused from LaGrande to Port-land. We had sleeping car accommodations to Seattle (from Ogden). The conductor told us that the train would definitely continue on to Seattle. Apparently the only purpose of the buses (two of them) was to get passengers for Portland in a little earlier. In the circumstances we elected to stay with the train. He said, "I think you made a wise choice. We have a fast engineer and we'll make good time on to Portland." When we arrived there, one bus had already arrived a few minutes earlier, but the second bus came in a few minutes behind our arrival. At this point Amtrak engine 250 was substituted for the UP. We were only in Portland 15 minutes. When we arrived in Seattle around midnight, we were just two hours late, having made up two hours.

Edward Mahoney
Dallas, Texas

The series of articles and notes you ran earlier this year on the Soo Line mixed trains in Wisconsin and Michigan were both new information to me and intriguing. When I took a vacation in July I thought I would give it a try. I wanted to share my experiences, not so much for

(continued on page 14)

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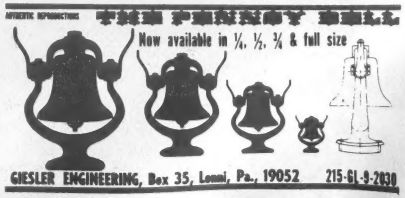

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ON THE COVER

A California Street cable car in San Francisco nears the end of its line at Market Street on Sep 4. Behind it, California Street seems to rise nearly vertically in the bright sun of late afternoon. The City's cable cars had their last runs on Sep 21 and were then shut down for a 20-month period of rebuilding of the entire cable system. Photo by RTN.

FOUR-DAY RAILROAD STRIKE DISRUPTS NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION

Hardly had we printed the news in our last issue that the railroad engineers' dispute was expected to be settled without a strike, when the news came that talks with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in Washington had broken off, and a nationwide railroad strike was about to begin. The strike began at one minute past midnight the morning of Sunday, Sep 19. Altho Amtrak was not a party to the negotiations, the other railroads that operate Amtrak trains were closed down. Amtrak's NE Corridor continued to operate, as did D&H and Conrail lines, not parties to the dispute. Most of the struck railroads attempted to bring Amtrak trains that were enroute thru to their destinations with supervisory personnel operating them. The major exception was the SP, which terminated Amtrak trains enroute when the strike began. Train 1 (17) terminated Phoenix & train 2 at Sanderson.

The last time a president went to Congress for legislation to end a railroad strike was 11 years ago, when President Nixon acted. The cover of RTN's 17th issue was decorated with newspaper headlines of the strike.

Train 11(18) terminated at Klamath Falls and the equipment deadheaded to Portland. Train 14(18) terminated at Oakland, as did #15. No. 18 terminated at San Luis Obispo. No. 5(17) terminated at Ogden and was turned. No. 6(17) went thru to Chicago. No.6(18) terminated at Sparks and psgrs were bused to Ogden to board the makeup train that had turned there, and went on to Chicago. No. 19(18) terminated at Atlanta. No. 35(17) terminated at Ogden & #36 at Milford. No. 25 terminated at Ogden & #26 at Boise. When trains were terminated, passengers were bused on. By the evening of Sep 22 the strike was over, with Congress having passed legislation requested by the Administration to require the BLE to accept binding arbitration. Commuter service was also disrupted in Chicago (except the South Shore line), Boston (B&M out, Maine Central not), and San Francisco. B&O was out Baltimore-Washington, and Conrail honored tickets but Amtrak did not.

HOUSE PASSES AMTRAK APPROPRIATION

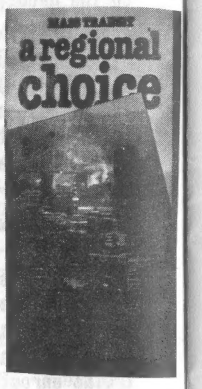
On Sep 21 the House passed the Fiscal '83 DOT appropriations bill which included $788 million for Amtrak. An Administration amendment which would have cut the amount severely was rejected, and there is a threat of a Presidential veto.

RAIL CANADA

MONTREAL TO SHERBROOKE passenger service was discontinued. The last runs of trains 142 and 143 were on Sep 5, and trains 144 and 145 on Sep 6. The termination was part of the train-cut orders of Transport Minister Pepin announced in July 1981. Among riders on the last run was Guy Chartrand, President of Transport 2000, the rail supporter lobby group. Critics said that some of the reasons for the train's loss of patronage in recent years were the too-early departure hour of 6:30 from Sherbrooke and the lack of food service aboard. The discontinuance leaves Sherbrooke as one of the largest cities in Canada without either air or rail passenger service.

TORONTO-BARRIE TRAIN was also discontinued, with last runs Sep 3. The weekday-only trains were numbered 146 and 147. On the last run from Toronto, demonstrators placed aboard the train a coffin painted up in VIA colors.

ABANDONING CANADIAN PACIFIC tracks between St-Jerome and Mont-Laurier is being sought by the railway. At hearings in the area Sep 21-25, Transport 2000 presented an 8-page brief, suggesting that a short line operator take over the line if CP refuses to operate it. The Quebec government, cities and business communities also opposed the abandonment.



"MASS TRANSIT-A REGIONAL CHOICE" is the title of a new brochure, shown here, prepared by the Ministry of Transport of Quebec. The brochure elucidates Transport Minister Clair's new plan for improving mass transit in the Montreal region. One aspect of the plan already in effect is the July 1 integration of the CN commuter trains between Montreal and Deux Montagnes. Transport 2000 has reported an important increase in patronage of the trains, and are applauding a new fare structure proposed by Mr. Clair. The CP Rail Montreal-Rigaud commuter line will be integrated into the MUCTC transit network either on Oct 1 or Nov 1. The fares will be cut in half on the MUC territory, between Montreal and Ste-Anne de Bellevue. T-2000 reports that the last commuter line still to be "saved" is the Montreal-Ste-Hilaire line on the South Shore. It has only one train daily, and the municipalities have not decided whether or not they want to keep it.

THE VIA LRC trains have been restricted to 80mph since about mid-August. CN reportedly claims that the trains are damaging the tracks and that the locomotives bounce too much at speeds above 80mph.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION featured a 20-minute program on VIA Rail and its problems on Sep 16. Interviewed on the program were Garth Campbell, ex-marketing VP for VIA, the mayor of Edmundston, the president of Jasper Park Chamber of Commerce, Transport 2000 president Guy Chartrand, and an assistant of the Transport Minister (the Minister himself refused to participate). Mr. Campbell predicted serious problems for VIA next winter because of unreliable equipment. The Transport Minister's assistant said that the Ministry's priorities are given to air and road transport. The program ended with films of the Montreal-Sherbrooke train going down the tracks for the last time.

A PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION on the reform of public transit in the Montreal area will be held in Quebec City on Oct 12. Transport 2000 will present a 50-page brief that will ask for greater participation of transit users in the administration of the system, on the rights of the handicapped, and for an integrated fare network.

MONTREAL-SENNETERRE SERVICE is "horrible", reports Transport 2000. The train, now tri-weekly since the Pepin cutbacks, became badly overcrowded this summer.

On one July occasion there were 111 standees on the (overnight) train. Passengers without seats had to stand all night or try to sleep on the floor of the coaches. On July 16, 40 passengers were reported standing as train 135 left La Tuque at midnight. Essential food and goods were left behind also in La Tuque because of insufficient capacity in the baggage car. That situation was mentioned in the Montreal press and on CKAC radio in Montreal. T-2000 has applied to the CTC for a complete revision of the service.

DISCOUNT AIR FARES will be restricted by the CTC effective Nov 1, a move that should benefit VIA Rail patronage. Restrictions are intended to ensure that fare cuts mainly attract new passengers and not divert regular passengers from regular-fare tickets. CP Air and Air Canada are the carriers mainly affected.

PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S train trip across Canada in early August was made in the borrowed private car of Governor General Ed Schreyer (the car is formally registered to the Federal Ministry of Transport). The car, one of two private cars running on the rear of VIA's transcontinental train, was marred and damaged by fruit, egg and rock-throwing protestors during his trip. Eastbound in Sudbury on Aug 19, the car was pelted by rocks and eggs by placard-carrying demonstrators protesting economic conditions. The VIA Rail crew panicked and left the station 20 minutes ahead of schedule, leaving many transcontinental passengers standing on the platform. At Orillia, Ont., the two cars were uncoupled and moved to a siding while Trudeau left in a limousine on Route 11 for a stay at a country cottage. During the Sudbury incident, two car windows were broken by rocks.

CALGARY-EDMONTON ROUTE upgrading depends upon the outcome of VIA's appeal to the CTC, which should be known this fall. VIA wants to run from South Edmonton (CP station) to Edmonton (CN downtown station), and this is the heart of the problem. To establish this direct rail link, CP is demanding $15 million to relocate its intermodal rail-truck operation, plus $750,000 for track upgrading. VIA believes these costs are unnecessary. VIA would like to have work going this October, so it can begin a one-year trial operation in January, which would include food and beverage service on-board, express service, and more weekend trains, along with some fare incentives. Besides a lot of money, CP wants the trip time lengthened by 20 minutes. VIA said that beyond 1983 it's thinking of new equipment, such as LRC's, and the possibility of placing a maintenance facility at Edmonton.

TORONTO-CHICAGO SERVICE, expected to start up on Oct 31, with joint Amtrak-VIA equipment and crews (Tempo trains and Amfleet), will probably have a daily 8:15am departure time from Toronto (1:00pm on Sundays), with a Chicago arrival at 6pm (11pm Sundays). Chicago departure will likely be 10:15am, with Toronto arrival time 9:50pm (Sunday northbound schedules have not be decided).

VIA'S NEW MARKETING Vice President is Howard Whiting, 57, former president and publisher of the Philadelphia Journal. His appointment was Aug 16.

NOVA SCOTIA GOVERNMENT complained about the slow schedules of VIA trains in that Province, and the CTC held hearings into the matter in August, on the Halifax-Sydney and Matapedia-Gaspe runs. Outcome of the hearings is not available yet.

CN AND CP are planning to purchase jointly most of the rail lines owned in Canada by Conrail, at a price of about $25 million. This would include the Niagara Falls, Ont.-Windsor main line, the Niagara River Bridge and the Detroit River Tunnel, which connects Windsor and Detroit. The deal must be approved by the CTC and the ICC.

BANFF-JASPER HIGHWAY might be closed this winter as an economy measure, said Parks Canada last month. About 25,000 cars use the highway in the winter.

CALGARY-EDMONTON TRAIN (#196 or 197) was hit by a truck in the baggage car the night of Aug 19, at Red Deer, killing the driver. It was the sixth railway crossing fatality this year in Alberta.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

How BART saves energy and money.

On an average passenger per mile basis, BART's use of energy is three times as efficient as an automobile in its total energy used for operations, and 10 times as efficient during rush hours in the commute direction.

According to the 1980 U.S. Census, the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Area ranks third in the nation in percentage of workers using public transportation to travel to their jobs.

The Census figures show that 17 percent of San Francisco/Oakland area commuters used transit in 1980, a record surpassed only by New York City at 44 percent and Chicago at 18 percent.

BART fares just increased in September, 1982, but a cost comparison with driving for one-way trips shows why BART is still the better bargain.

From (Station)	Auto Miles	Auto Cost*	BART Fare	Auto Miles	Auto Cost*	BART Fare
Concord	30.5	$4.67	$1.95	23.0	$2.27	$1.40
Walnut Creek	23.5	$4.23	$1.80	16.0	$1.83	$1.25
Fremont	34.5	$4.92	$2.05	24.0	$2.34	$1.50
Richmond	16.5	$3.79	$1.60	11.5	$1.55	$1.00
Berkeley	9.0	$3.32	$1.40	4.0	$1.08	$0.60
Daly City	8.5	$2.91	$1.10	19.0	$2.45	$1.50

*These are out-of-pocket cost figures. They assume an average occupancy rate of 1.3 people in a compact car, and are based on American Automobile Association and CalTrans data for 1982. Trips crossing the Bay Bridge include one-half of the 75¢ toll charge. One half of the daily parking charge is also included, assuming daily parking charges in San Francisco of $4.75 and Oakland of $1.65, based on pro-rated monthly charges in public parking facilities. Mileage rates are 6.3¢ per passenger mile for gas, oil, and maintenance. These are operating costs only and do not include other auto expenses, such as insurance and depreciation.

THE ABOVE TABLE was published as part of BART's "A Decade of Service" report that appeared in Sunday papers upon BART's 10th anniversary Sep 11 (see last issue). The table qualifies for RTN's "Slip of the Month Club," however, since two important table headings were omitted from it, so that it makes no sense. In the blank space above the columns of figures there should be two headings: San Francisco (on the left) and Oakland (on the right). Then the table will become self-explanatory.

THE CABLE CARS of San Francisco were closed down Sep 21 for a 20-month period of reconstruction of the cable system. The last cable car rolled into the car barn at 4:46am on Sep 22 with SF Muni general manager Richard Sklar at the controls. On the last full day of operation, the lines were shut down for 4 hours to splice a broken cable. A large celebration in the city bade farewell to the famous cars until summer, 1984. The last operation of a Muni PCC streetcar on Market Street took place Sep 19. The PCC cars had been running on weekends only on the surface of Market, largely supplanted by the LRV's in the subway below.

UMTA ANNOUNCED ON Sep 10 the selection of 8 institutions as university centers for Transit Research and Management Development. They are Univ. of Calif., Irvine; NY Institute of Technology, Old Westbury; Portland (OR) State Univ.; Pennsylvania Wharton School, Philadelphia; Texas Southern, Houston; Florida A&M, Tallahassee; U of Michigan, Ann Arbor; and U of Indiana, Bloomington. Federal financial assistance will be provided for up to seven years.

LOS ANGELES BUS drivers were on strike five days, Sep 15-19.

MIAMI'S METRORAIL SYSTEM won't be able to be used conveniently by bicyclists. System planners recently eliminated bike lockers from station plans to reduce costs. Cyclists are angry, and have asked that cycles be allowed on trains also, but Metrorail officials will only say that they will consider the matter.

PENNSYLVANIA PASSENGER SERVICES, Inc., that wants to operate the commuter lines Philadelphia-Pottsville and Philadelphia-Bethlehem, has been holding talks with Conrail on the matter this month.

Amtrak's MONTREALER's 10th birthday will be celebrated with a trackside ceremony the afternoon of Sep 29 at Washington. The train has carried almost 1,318,000 passengers since its startup on Sep 29, 1972.

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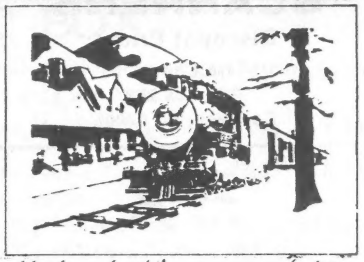

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★ THE NORTH STAR IS REVIVED AGAIN ★

THE NORTH STAR resumed service on Sep 17 as a Fri-Sat-Sun train for the rest of 1982. There were 60 passengers on the first run, and the consist was: engine 375 (F40PH), cars 34013 (coach), 31013 (coach-baggage) and 34082 (cOach). On Saturday Sep 18 there were 210 passengers aboard--sold out. After that, the engineers' strike hit and the train was annulled. The train will remain Superliner equipment for the rest of the year. One of the coaches has a lower-level snack bar. The trainset reportedly will deadhead to and from Chicago, on train 7 the EMPIRE BUILDER on Thursday evenings to St. Paul and back to Chicago on train 8 on Monday mornings. The train had had its "last run" on Sep 6 (see last issue), but funds became available to commence the weekend-only operation thru December. In response to requests from Duluth officials, Senator Durenberger contacted Amtrak on Sep 2 to request that a second audit be performed on all accounts relating to the NORTH STAR. The purpose was to verify the accuracy of Amtrak's calculation that all state funding for the train had been consumed, and also to determine the actual cost of preserving the service thru the rest of 1982. On the following week, Amtrak brought the results of its audit to the Senator, results which indicated that under existing Amtrak accounting assumptions, the state contribution had indeed been exhausted. Over the next week, the Senator and his staff worked with Amtrak officials on a daily basis to review and reevaluate the accounting assumption that lay behind the audit. In the course of that review, the Senator raised questions about the mechanisms used to assign maintenance costs for the train. Beginning in Oct 1981, Amtrak had dropped its traditional practice of assigning maintenance costs on a per-mile basis in favor of a new accounting principle that assessed each train with a single maintenance payment per trip. Under the "per trip" rather than "per mile" method of accounting, every train in the Amtrak system pays the same maintenance factor regardless of the length of its trip. While this actually provides a more fair assessment for most Amtrak routes (since long distance routes are in fact more efficient), it does create an unfair assessment on several state-operated trains that travel short distances.

Upon reviewing this information, the Senator contacted Amtrak President Graham Claytor and requested that Amtrak review the situation. On making that review,

(continued on page 19)

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A LETTER FROM GRAHAM CLAYTOR

THE FOLLOWING LETTER, WRITTEN SEP. 16, WAS RECEIVED BY RTN CORRESPONDENT PETER BRETZ FROM AMTRAK PRESIDENT W. GRAHAM CLAYTOR, JR. IT DESCRIBES CHANGES SCHEDULED FOR NOV. 1 IN AMTRAK DINING CAR SERVICE, AND COVERS OTHER MATTERS. THE STORY BY MR. BRETZ THAT MR. CLAYTOR REFERS TO APPEARED IN RTN NO. 246.

I very much appreciated your sharing with me the recent article you wrote on your experiences aboard our trains. As you may have heard, my own travels, over the past couple of months since taking over this position and into the next several months, will I'm sure be as extensive as yours. Therefore, I was particularly interested in what you had to say.

Specific to your comments about equipment maintenance, I must disagree that, "...shoddy maintenance practice is synonymous with Amtrak..." Certainly, we do have many areas needing improvement, but our maintenance has been improving steadily. You'll be interested to know that the overhauled Heritage equipment operating on the LAKE SHORE (which favorably impressed you) is maintained by the same facility responsible for Superliner maintenance.

Admittedly, the interior design of the Superliners is not the best, and we are actively resolving some of these conditions. We have instituted over 30 Superliner modifications in addition to the truck retrofit program. For example, the leg rest has been modified to increase the amount of pressure it can sustain; Heritage-style door locks are being applied to the sleepers; the waste treatment system timer has been changed to a solid state module; we are applying new shower control valves; the diner booth seat cushions are being upgraded, etc.

Both the Passenger Services and Mechanical Departments have developed and implemented a joint program designed to ensure that mechanical defects noted enroute are corrected.

With regard to long-haul dining service, effective November 1 newly revised menus will include greater variety and appeal. We will be adding such items as a continental breakfast, a la carte hot and cold cereals, fresh fruit cup or juice; hamburgers will be grilled on-board, and we will be adding hot turkey sandwiches, fresh salads with tuna and additional desserts; for dinner, you will find filet of sole stuffed with crab meat freshly prepared on-board; we are also adding a vegetarian selection and a greater dessert variety. Stainless steel flatware will return as well. We will also institute a systemwide reservation system in our dining cars. On short-haul trains we will be introducing several new products as well.

Also later this fall, we will be administering customer relations refresher courses to our on-board crews and greater attention is being given to proper on-board provisioning.

You may be assured we have done much over the past several months to improve our maintenance and service, and we will continue to do much more. We certainly need the patience and support of people such as yourself. I hope we can count on you!

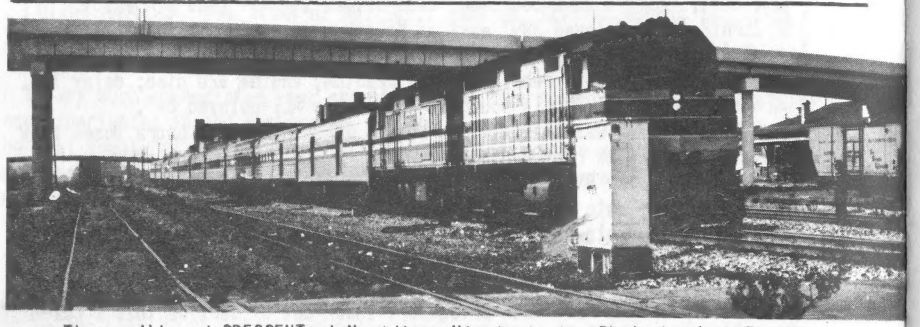
THE PANIC BOX

The following is a summary of major unusual occurrences on the Amtrak system during the month of June. Several days' data are missing.

(NOTE: Number in parentheses following train no. is date train left city of irigin)

6-1 SOUTHWEST LTD blocked by bridge fire betw Lamy & Kennedy NM; #3(31) & 4(31) turned and passengers were bused between trains.
6-1 Corridor train 184 delayed 82" when engines 924 and then 967 had problems.
6-1 ADIRONDACK #68 terminated at Rhinecliff NY, engine failure, unit 489.
6-1 MONTREALER #60&61 detoured over CV RR New Haven-Brattleboro via New London & Palmer, & #142, 416, 420, 419, 421 terminated & turned, psgrs bused between, due to Conrail freight derailment at Enfield CT.
6-2 SF ZEPHYRS #5(1) & 6(31) detoured via Council Bluffs IA to avoid Platt River Bridge near Omaha; caller said bomb was on bridge, and in boxes in both baggage cars; train s were searched; same caller as 5-31 (see RTN #250).
6-2 SF ZEPHYR #6(1) delayed 399" east of McCook when engine 322 derailed one wheel & axle broke. Unit 322 towed to siding, BN 6624 added on point.
6-3 Corridor train 186 hit debris west of Trenton, engine 920 died; delay 72".
6-3 CRESCENT #20(3) hit debris south of Birmingham AL; delayed 84".
6-7 NE Corridor track washout betw New London & New Haven CT; psgrs bused betw these points; track restored on 6-9.
6-7 Track opened after BN frt derail't at Hauser ID blocked EMPIRE BUILDERS, which detoured; date of derailment unknown.
6-6 High winds blew auto-carrier freight car across tracks at Topeka, blocked SOUTHWEST LTD #4(5) 180", & 53" further on due to trees down on tracks. ANN RUTLEDGE #304 delayed 71" due to switch & signals out due to storm.
6-9 NE Corridor tracks New Haven-Bridgeport taken out of service this morning for catenary repairs. Nos. 190 & 192 left NY with engines on rear to effect a push-pull operation at Bridgeport.
6-8 ELECTRIC CITY EXPRESS #75 terminated at Albany, broken windshield unit 160.
6-8 EMPIRE BUILDER #8(7) hit truck at private crossing 35 mis east of Havre MT. Driver minor injuries; train delayed 35", BN unit 6440 added. #226 damaged.
6-8 ANN RUTLEDGE #303 delayed 69", red signals caused by thunderstorm.
6-9 STATE HOUSE # 301 hit debris at Virden IL, car 20231 damaged, 63" delay.
6-9 SOUTHWEST LTD #4(8) delayed 127" betw Kingman & Seligman AZ, engine trouble.
6-9 #412 (SPV-2000 #993) had both engines die at Berlin CT; CR unit pushed it to Sprignfield, delayed 106".
6-9 SF ZEPHYR #5 116" late leaving Chicago, brake trouble with unit 362.
6-9 LAKE SHORE LTD #48(9) hit bicyclist at Ligonter IN; delayed 82".
6-9 SF ZEPHYR #6(8) delayed 100", torsion bar problem with car 32002, Harvard NE.
6-14 EMPIRE BUILDER #8(14) & 7(13) detoured Seattle-Spokane via Yakima & Pasco due to BN frt derail't at Trinidad WA, 22mis east of Wenatchee.
6-14 SAN JOAQUINS #709 & 710 delayed 3hrs by ATSF frt which hit flat bed truck at milepost 1067.3.
6-14 COAST STARLIGHT #14(14) hit debris at Dixon CA, terminated Davis (see RTN 246)
6-15 SF ZEPHYR #5(14) derailed at Emerson IA (see RTN 246 & 247).
6-14 Metroliner 605 hit, injured trespasser near Wynnewood; delayed 39", four other trains delayed.
6-14 Corridor trains 94(14), 193 & 174 delayed when Conn Moveable Bridge balked.
6-15 EMPIRE BUILDER: BN frt derail't at Sultan WA 4:45pm, #7(14) detour Spokane-Seattle via Yakima & Pasco; #8(15) backed from Edmonds WA to Seattle & then ran same detour, losing 347"; #7 lost 84".
6-16 Metroliner 616 went dead west of Gap PA, believed hit by lightning.
6-16 EAGLE #21(15) held 125" at Dallas due to severed gas line at Browder Tower.

6-16 CAPITOL LTD #441 hit bicyclist near Cumberland station MD; delayed 96".
6-16 Corridor train 187 delayed 106", repair AC unit car 21052, & signal failure.
6-17 MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE #374 derailed car 9621 at 5mph leaving Ann Arbor station; one psgr minor injuries; train continued without car 9621.
6-17 Corridor train 280 delayed 54" by failure of engine 938.
6-17 400-500 pieces of luggage recovered from SFZ derailment of 6-15; 35-40 are completely water-soaked, rest okay. Forward of luggage to psgrs begins with 100-150 pieces put on #5(17) at Omaha on 6-18.
6-17 EAGLE #22(15) delayed 127" San Antonio, repairing car 38020.
6-17 Corridor train 177 delayed 76", hit debris east of Bronx River Bridge.
6-18 COAST STARLIGHT #14(18) delayed 65" by SP frt derail't betw Eugene & Albany.
6-18 CAPITOL LTD #440(17) delayed 71" after B&O frt hit auto betw Miller & Cumbo.
6-18 LAKE SHORE #49(18) delayed 60" to remove car 4004 at Albany, sub 21129.
6-19 ILLINOIS ZEPHYR #348 delayed Colchester IL, BN frt engine failure ahead,94".
6-19 SILVER METEOR #98(19) hit debris Pompano Beach FL, 76" delay.
6-19 Corridor train 142 hit debris near Trenton, delayed 59".
6-19 CRESCENT #20(19) hit auto west of Anniston Al, no injuries, 71" delay.



The northbound CRESCENT at Meridian, Mississippi. Photo by Jack Ferry.

6-19 MONTREALER #60(19) hit debris west of Hudson; delayed 62".
6-19 SF ZEPHYR #5(19) had engine 374 die at Burlington IA; at Lincoln picked up engine 305 from #6(18); delayed about 60".
6-19 Boise ID station broken into, nothing taken.
6-20 LAKE SHORE #48(19) delayed 68" when factory fire near right of way east of Rochester damaged signal lines.
6-20 SOUTHWEST LTD #3(19) delayed 178" by hotbox on engine 254 near Albuquerque.
6-22 ANN RUTLEDGE #303-304 & ST. LOUIS MULE #342 delayed up to 3 hrs by MP frt derailment 12 mis west of Jefferson City; River Subdiv closed for MofW.
6-23 COAST STARLIGHT #11(22) on fire at Gibson CA (see RTN #247).
6-22 SPIRIT OF CALIF #18(21) had engine 247 die 4mins out of San Luis Obispo; SP 8991 subbed to Oakland, where 299 subbed; 97" delay.
6-22 SILVER STAR #82(21) delayed 1hr after engine 379 had hot box, Manson NC.
6-22 SILVER METEOR #87(21) delayed 62" Savannah-Jacksonville, signals out,storm.
6-22 CAPITOL LTD #440(21) delayed 130" by track work FO Tower-Sandpatch.
6-22 SF ZEPHYR left Oakland 66" late due to bad elec cable on car 31018.
6-22 LAKE SHORE #449(22) delayed 91" west of Springfield, engine trouble #308.
6-22 Ten Corridor trains delayed 2-37", Dock Moveable Bridge stuck.
6-23 LAKE SHORE #48(23) detoured Porter-Toledo via Niles & Jackson on CR Michigan Div due to CR frt derail't 1 mile east of Elhart IN.
6-23 SPV-2000 #997 (train 415) caught fire at Meriden CT station; CR engine 7249 towed it, delayed 1hr, 36mins.
6-23 COAST STARLIGHT #14(23) hit debris at Tolenas CA east of Martinez, damaging cars 1178, 35920 & 31026. Delayed 2hrs, 27mins.
6-23 Corridor power outage delayed #176, 290 & 60 from 16 to 63mins.

 (continued on page 21)

UPDATE ON THE DEL MONTE REVIVAL

For about eleven years, RTN has been writing about the proposed restoration of the DEL MONTE, the San Francisco-Monterey train that was discontinued when Amtrak took over passenger service. Now signs are that a revival of the train is becoming more likely than ever. The Mayor of Monterey, Gerald Fry, strongly endorses the train's return, according to newspaper reports. That is a good sign. But the best sign, reported in issue 248, is that there is now $2.5 million in the state budget dedicated to the train's startup. The following details of recent efforts to reinstate the train were provided by Elmer Lagorio, an historian of the train:

On Jun 29, escrow closed on the sale of portions of the Monterey branch by SP. The joint powers park agency has acquired fee simple title to the 2.25-mile strip of track from the Monterey depot to Lovers Point (17th St.) in Pacific Grove for $2.6 million. The cities of Monterey and Seaside acquired title to 2.23 miles of the right-of-way extending from Camino El Estero (a ¼-mile east of Monterey depot) to Contra Costa St (where the old Seaside station stop was made) in Seaside. Cost of the latter segment was $4.67 million.

The Monterey depot grounds between Washington St. and Camino El Estero is being retained by SP and is being discussed as a site for hotel development. Either the Monterey station will have to be moved to Camino El Estero or a new depot built at Camino El Estero.

An out-of-court settlement of a lawsuit has been reached between SP and the state Coastal Commission. SP had sued over whether abandoning portions of the Monterey branch was subject to review by the Commission. The settlement calls for SP to give the Commission a 6-month option to buy the strip of track between Lovers Point in Pacific Grove and Asilomar (the western terminus of the Monterey branch) should the SP decide to sell that section in the near future.

The remainder of the branch line from Castroville to Contra Costa St. in Seaside remains in SP's hands--altho at one time the railroad indicated it would petition to abandon that portion of the Monterey branch too.

Regarding the ad that appeared in Northern California newspapers (RTN 245, p.16), Brent Limbocker, local businessman, is ready to incorporate the Peninsula Railroad Co. to operate three propane-powered streetcars from Fisherman's Wharf at Monterey (two blocks west of the Monterey station) to Lovers Point in Pacific Grove. The cars, costing $133,000 each, would be replicas of the Series 500 California-type rail car in operation at the turn of the century. The cars would be similar to the ones used in Monterey. Ostensibly, the line would be to transport tourists between Cannery Row in New Monterey and Fisherman's Wharf, the two popular spots along the waterfront.

The joint powers park agency wishes to make the portion of the branch line between Fisherman's Wharf and Lovers Point into a bike-hiking trail. No decision has been made as yet whether to rip up the track. If such a development occurs, then there will be no light rail service between Monterey and Pacific Grove. Apparently the right-of-way is not wide enough to accommodate both the track and recreational trail.

Unlike the situation in 1977 when Caltrans refused to start up the DEL MONTE, despite legislation which permitted 100% state financing for the restoration of rail service to Monterey, Caltrans no longer opposes the revival of the service. In RTN 242 we reported on a Caltrans study of the revival, which concluded that one roundtrip per day could be economically sustained, with the farebox covering 47% of costs provided the train ran to Market Street in San Francisco. The SP has reportedly agreed to the plan of running it to Market Street (closer to downtown than the present 4th and Townsend station--see discussion last issue regarding extension of commute trains to Market Street).

A public hearing was planned for Sep 17 in Monterey, with Monterey and Caltrans officials discussing the train. If news from that hearing is available before we go to press with this issue of RTN, it will be included in the Mixed Train of Thoughts section.

THE SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR TAKES A DETOUR THAT COULD BECOME PERMANENT

by David Bragdon

It was apparent to railfans that something was wrong with the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR leaving Chicago on July 3, but as usual passengers were the last to be told. The arrival and departure screens at Union Station gave two hints of trouble in Iowa: the eastbound ZEPHYR was posted as a substitute "Bus from Omaha," and the westbound ILLINOIS ZEPHYR to Quincy was posted to leave an hour late, at 6:55, the SFZ's slot. Despite these signs of strange happenings on the Burlington, the attendant in the Amtrak lounge would not reveal anything. Would the SFZ leave on time? Yes. Was it being rerouted? He didn't know. Only further questions forced him to provide more clues: would the train go through Ottumwa? Listen for announcements, he said. Why was the eastbound train a bus? Floods in Iowa, he said. Putting all these clues together led to one deduction: the BN line across Iowa was probably disrupted again, and the Amtrak train would be sent to Omaha over the Chicago and North Western.

Passengers bound to points between Chicago and Omaha were directed to board the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, but were not told they would be taken off that train at Galesburg and bused to their destinations. Meanwhile, the SFZ loaded at the north side of the station. There, an usher informed passengers for the first time that the train would not be taking its normal route. Aboard the train, no further information was provided as the train sat in Union Station for a half-hour past its scheduled departure time. Apparently it was waiting for C&NW pilots and a C&NW locomotive with cab signals, but the delay was neither explained nor apologised for. As usual, despite a functioning public address system and a train crawling with employees, passengers were left to guess what was going on. If Amtrak is going to pay literally dozens of employees to ride each train, they should be expected to make an effort to make passengers comfortable.

At 7:26 the train pulled out. It shortly crossed over to the North Western with no problem and picked up speed thru commuter territory on smooth track. The BN crew collected tickets while the North Western pilots sat back and enjoyed cigarettes. At 8:52 the train sped thru De Kalb, at 9:08 Rochelle, at 9:40 Nelson, and came to its first stop in Clinton at 10:27 PM. The BN crew got off there and a new North Western crew boarded, wasting no time in giving the highball to continue west. Obviously, North Western's crews are accustomed to moving trains, and don't dawdle around terminals. The new crew ran to Boone, and they were surprised by the assignment they'd been given that night. They had come to work expecting to run a freight, as usual, and then had been told to pilot this exotic passenger train instead. In overalls and T-shirts, they didn't know what to make of it, and walked thru the train looking at every aspect of it as tho it were a rare Egyptian vase. When they walked into the diner, the steward snapped, "You can't go in there. We're closed." The Conductor, who was resplendent in an "Iowa Hawks" T-shirt and fading blue pants, pointed to his North Western cap and said, "I'm the Conductor!" The steward let him pass, no doubt thinking he'd never seen a conductor dressed quite like that. The rear brakeman even asked if passenger trains carry cabooses!

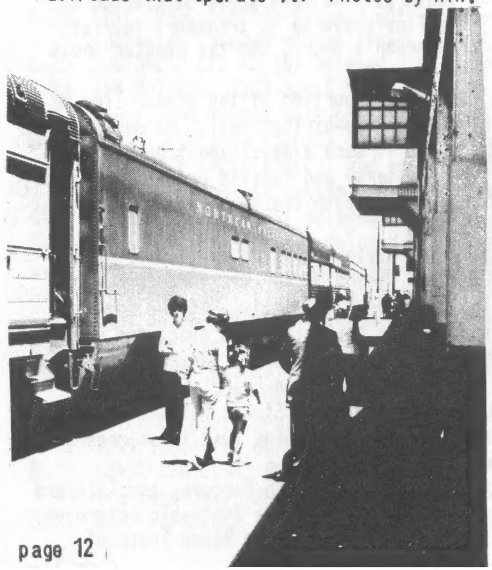
About twenty miles west of Clinton the SFZ reached the end of the welded rail that had carried it from Chicago. From this point west, the westbound main is traditional jointed rail, and the difference was obvious. The east bound track is welded rail all the way from Omaha (or Council Bluffs) to Chicago, allowing eastbounds to run much faster than westbound trains. The SFZ's arrival in Omaha on Independence Day was at 6:42 AM, over three hours late.

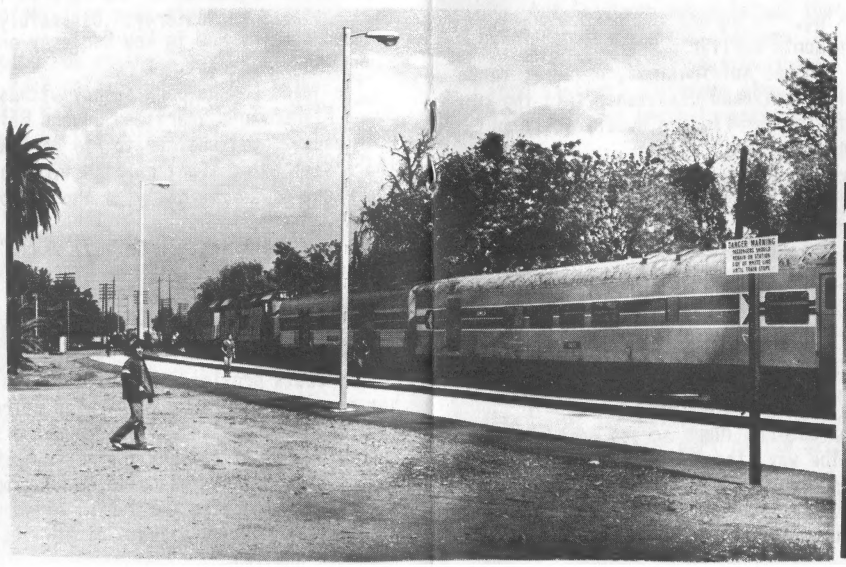
At Omaha, two buses had deposited westbound passengers from the BN stations that the train had bypassed. They too had been given non-information or misinformation by Amtrak. One gentleman waiting to board the SFZ in Aurora, Illinois, was surprised when the four-car Amfleet ILLINOIS ZEPHYR rolled in when the long Superliner SFZ was due, but he did as he was told and boarded. Once passengers who were supposed to be on the SFZ had boarded the IZ, they were told that they would be getting off in Galesburg to board a bus that would take them to their intended train. When this passenger asked the crew how long the bus ride would be, he was told they would be on the bus for half an hour. Of course, the ride from Galesburg to Omaha took about seven hours.

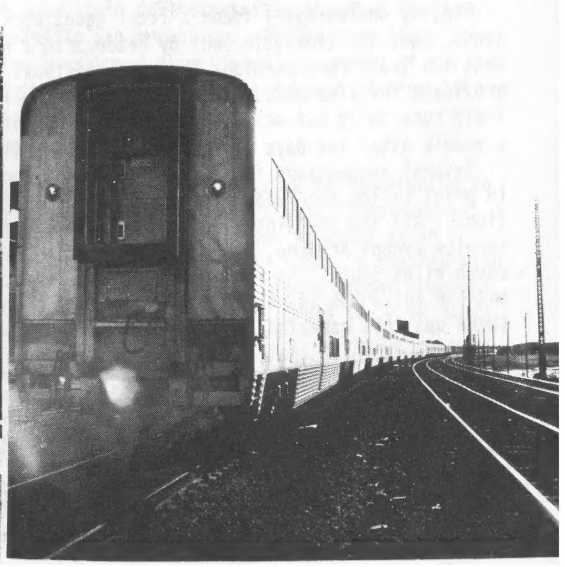
Amtrak cannot help it when floods wash out a line. Passengers understand that, and should be expected to tolerate some unavoidable inconvenience. But they should not be expected to endure delays and bus rides without being informed of the causes and without being provided with an accurate explanation of how the emergency plans are to work. In this situation as in others, Amtrak failed to tell passengers why thay were late. Passengers will be much more patient when they are told what is happening.

North Western employees at all levels of

Stages in the evolution of the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR: (left:) At first used railroad-supplied locomotives, and unrefurbished, unrepainted cars from various railroads (seen here in July, 1971). (center:) Later came new Amtrak engines, and cars had been refurbished and painted uniformly on the exteriors (seen here in April, 1978). (right:) Latest change was acquisition of new Superliner cars and newer locomotives (pictured in Jan, 1981). Will the next major changes in the SFZ be a change in railroads that operate it? Photos by RTN.







company are talking about the possibility that their railroad will get the contract to operate the SFZ between Chicago and Omaha every day. Reasons for the possible switch are: Amtrak is somewhat tired of BN's performance, and the C&NW (which has a few railfans in its management ranks) thinks that with some incentive clauses they could make money on the Amtrak contract. "It's like a unit train 365 days a year," one North Western attorney summed up the marketing departments's attitude. A fast passenger train could probably be eased into the North Western's fleet of fast frieghts because most of the route is double-tracked, and trains are dispatched and operated quickly. There is concern that increased coal traffic, because it moves in slower trains, could alter operating conditions, but for now the North Western seems to be

seriously negotiating with Amtrak. One further consideration is signalling, since North Western has cab signalling and Amtrak locomotives are not equipped for it. The railroad is considering taking out this system, and in the meantime could run North Western units at the point ahead of the Amtrak locomotives.

In short, a route that was a detour for the SFZ in July 1982 may soon become its regular path.

LETTERS (continued from page 2)

publication but as a cautionary note for others who might want to try it.

I wrote the Soo Line offices at the END OF MAY asking for a schedule. What they sent me shows a morning departure for Neenah, in spite of the remark in your issue 244 that the train leaves at night. Thus began a pattern I would continue to encounter when seeking information, a kind of indifference. Whether this stemmed from preoccupation or disinterest was not clear.

I reached Neenah the night of July 4, and called the local Soo Line number. According to my notes, the train was to go out Monday evening, "instead of morning." Wanting further information, on Monday, July 5 I walked to the yard office and found a number of engines--none running--and no people. After various attempts to call all day, I finally called Minneapolis. He gave me the Stevens Point dispatcher, who said that he was the ONLY person working on the WHOLE division due to the holiday. Apparently the entire railroad was given that holiday off and might be given future ones. He agreed the train ran at night but said it was daily.

Finally on Tuesday I found a local agent working. He agreed the train runs at night, that the timetable sent by headquarters a month earlier was wrong, and that the train runs straight thru to Gladstone. He was not inclined, or able, to provide a new timetable. Either he or the earlier-mentioned dispatcher said the train runs daily but only carries passengers tri-weekly. Finding myself still in a muddle after two days and no train yet, I went on by bus.

Several suggestions for potential riders: avoid holidays, try to get something in print (altho the headquarters sent me bad information), study the bus connections. All the starting and transfer points mentioned in your issue 236 have bus service except Argonne, which is tiny. There is service to Crandon, Wisconsin, seven miles south. So if someone travels light, puts up with the bad information and can get a bus if stranded, perhaps they can make the trip. As I said above, there was this repeated vagueness, even tho no one was rude.

Amtrak train #6 that I rode from Denver on July 3 was routed over the Chicago & North Western from Omaha to Chicago. A number of the railfans aboard were enthusiastic over that route and Amtrak's possible future use of the routing. I am not sure of our departure time from Omaha, but despite 70mph across most of Iowa, no passenger stops and little delay along the way, the train arrived Chicago 1½ hours behind schedule. I believe the route is slightly shorter, too.

Richard F. Myers
Denver, Colorado

Mixed Train of Thoughts

"THE REAL PEOPLE", the NBC TV programs filmed largely aboard Amtrak's SUNSET LIMITED and EAGLE, opened with a 90-minute show on Sep 22. We judged the program to be excellent at least in terms of good publicity for Amtrak trains. There was none of the nonsense seen in the past in the likes of "Silver Streak" or "Supertrain". It was a fast-paced show with lots of interior and exterior views of the train. The TV people rode in special cars on the rear of the train, with the program name "Real People Express" emblazoned on the side. On Sep 29 a second, 60-min program continuing the trip will be televised. Amtrak business car 10,000 was used on the rear of the train, which was the SUNSET that left Los Angeles July 25. The special cars transferred to the EAGLE at San Antonio Jul 27, arriving Chicago Jul 28.....

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"MOST WANTED MAN" on the FBI's list was arrested by New York City police as he detrained from Amtrak's SILVER METEOR in Penn Station on Sep 15. Joseph M. McDonald was said to be carrying suitcases containing three dismantled submachine guns. McDonald was No. 1 on the FBI's most-wanted list for six years, longer than any other person.....

HIGH SPEED RAIL Compact, of Midwestern states, will have its autumn meeting at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn, Michigan Oct 7 and 8. Larry Gilson of Amtrak and American High Speed Rail Corporation will give a presentation. On the business agenda is a discussion of developing a working relationship between the Compact and American High Speed Rail. Registration information is available by calling (313) 593-1234, the hotel's number. The Budd Co. will host a reception.....

THE NON-EXISTENT BUS: The SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA schedule shows a bus connection from southbound train 15 at Oakland to take passengers to the Caltrain Peninsula commute station, arriving there at 9:50pm, in time to catch the last, 10pm, train to Peninsula points. Caltrans complained to Amtrak this month that the bus does not actually exist, and passengers are required to wait for the 10:05pm departure of the SAN JOAQUIN's bus. There aren't many passengers to San Francisco from train 15, but Caltrans asked Amtrak that substitute taxi service be arranged for them whenever there are passengers ticketed to San Francisco. At the same time, Caltrans complained to Amtrak about the trashy and dilapidated appearance of the Oakland station. Caltrans also noted that 13 platform lights are out of order at Richmond, and trash is accumulating along the right of way.....

★ ★ ★

THE MERGER OF the UP, MoPac and WP into Pacific Rail System is threatening to the Rio Grande, as it is to some other railroads, reports a Wall Street Journal analysis, but actually it may benefit the Rio Grande because it makes it an ideal acquisition by SP or Santa Fe to enlarge one of those roads to compete with Pacific Rail. Rio Grande's stock actually rose upon news of the merger proposal, notes the Journal. And what will happen to the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR if SP or Santa Fe should merge with D&RGW?.....

MAINTENANCE OF WAY bases have been opened by Amtrak at Pawtucket RI and Perryville MD at a cost of about $6.1 million each. Both provide a centralized staging point for maintenance of track, communications and signals, bridges and buildings and are part of the $2.5 billion NEC Improvement Project.....

$50 ROOM DEAL: A new agreement by Amtrak and the Radisson Hotels offers Amtrak passengers a room, single or double, for $50 a night in the Radisson Chicago, St. Louis or Kansas City hotels.....

NY'S PENN STATION had a fire on Sep 14 at 5:40pm, under LIRR train 1066 on track 13. Heavy smoke poured out on the track level and lower passenger levels of the station, and blower fans were turned on. Train 1066 was ordered out of the station 9mins early, at 5:46, to allow fire fighters access to the fire. Trains on tracks 12 and 14 also moved out. Due to heavy smoke reaching the upper concourse, Penn Station was evacuated at 5:50pm, and all trains were held out of the station. LIRR trains used tracks 16-21. By 6:08pm smoke was clearing, and trains were released and loading began. Amtrak trains 175, 225, 227, 125, 184 and 152 were delayed from 3 to 22mins, and 16 NJT and 11 LIRR trains were delayed.....

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EASTBOUND SOUTHWEST LIMITED on Sep 14 pulling into Pasadena station hit a shopping cart, evidently one of the small luggage carriers, and this small accident somehow knocked out the head-end power of the train, and the crew could not get it restored. Aboard the train was a woman passenger with a plugged-in dialysis machine. She and the machine were moved to the station, where electrical power was available, until the train's HEP was restored. Engines 254 and 236 were removed and engines 238 and 287 were brought from Redondo to substitute. The train got going again 160 minutes late.....

AMTRAK'S "ANYWHERE FARE" was being advertised in September in newspaper ads that included the above graphics. Time is running out on use of the fare. Return trips must begin by Oct 30. Some passengers have been running into hassles with Amtrak on the fare. The tariff instructions originally indicated that passengers could travel "via any routing." Thus some riders, for example, took advantage of tri-weekly schedules to program themselves a stopover along one leg of their route. For instance, a Seattle to East Coast traveler would choose the CARDINAL for the easterly leg of the trip, arriving in Chicago on a day that requires a stopover to await the CARDINAL's departure day. Now Amtrak is plugging such "loopholes" by requiring that no stopover be made if an earlier train is leaving. In the above example, the traveler might be required to use the BROADWAY instead of the CARDINAL, eliminating the Chicago stopover. We believe Amtrak shouldn't be so chintzy about the fare. What skin is it off Amtrak's back if a passenger has a stopover?.....

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CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, train 58 that left New Orleans Sep 13 was hit in the side by a mobile crane working near the tracks a short distance out from the New Orleans station. The second, third and fourth cars of the train were hit: car 2880 had $3000 damage, with several windows broken and a post bent; car 28307 had several windows broken and superficial sheet metal damage, for $60,000 in damages; and car 4600 suffered similar damage, amounting to $2500. There were no passenger injuries, but two Amtrak employees were injured. The train returned to the station and cars 2439, 28304 and 4607 were substituted, and the train left again 2hrs late. Passengers were offered complimentary beverages and were given a free telephone call to those awaiting their arrival.....

BEWARE OF BAGGAGE thieves in NY's Penn Station, NARP advises. They help passengers put bags in lockers, then give them the wrong key.....

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: Daylight Saving Time ends and Standard Time begins again on Oct 31, not the other way around, as we indicated last issue (page 16). Remember, it's spring forward, fall back. (Or is it fall forward, spring back?)... In issue 249 we said that Gary Cooper played Rhet Butler in "Gone With the Wind." Actually, it was Cary Grant, as a reader pointed out. What does this have to do with rail travel? It was the answer to one of the "mystery voices" in an Amtrak employee contest held in July. The third and most serious error to correct here appeared in issue 250 (page 18), and it stated that Staten Island (rather than Manhattan Island) was the location of the connecting track between Penn Station and the Conrail Hudson River mainline which Amtrak will use to consolidate all trains in Penn Station and stop using Grand Central. The error came about thru a typing slipup in transcribing material. Among several people calling it to our attention was Ted Scull, rail writer whose work has appeared in RTN. As the author of "The Staten Island Ferry", to be published in Oct 1982 by Quadrant Press, New York, he should know something about Staten Island. Reader John Barnett added some details: "The Westside Connector...is part of a major rail freight network which reached down to St. John's Terminal at Houston Street (near Canal). St. John's Terminal was a trucking terminal when I last worked in the area about 20 years ago. I've read recently that the City of New York is planning to revitalize portions of the track that is left (and would also be used by Amtrak if the plan is carried out) in order to provide itself with an alternative to highway transport...".....

★ ★ ★

THE TRANSPORTATION CENTER of Northwestern University (Evanston IL) has just published a research report by Ronald Dale Karr entitled "Amtrak--Ten Years of Controversy: A Guide to the Literature." The 68-page report consists of a bibliography of articles on Amtrak, and a 10-page introduction summarizing Amtrak's history. The coverage seems very thorough--a vast variety of sources is covered, including RTN, and a brief abstract or categorization of contents appears with most entries. The report was published in August. We do not have information concerning the availability of the report. One might write the publisher (zip code is 60201).....

THE DOME CARS that may be converted to head-end power for Amtrak's CAPITOL LIMITED and CITY OF NEW ORLEANS are Budd-built dome coaches, most likely from the Great Northern or Northern Pacific, as these were in the best condition, according to an Amtrak source. One such car was pictured in our article on the subject in our last issue (page 11).....

★ ★ ★

FORMER AMTRAK PRESIDENT Alan S. Boyd was interviewed by transportation writer Albert R. Karr in the Wall Street Journal of Sep 2 (see "Slip of the Month Club", last issue). Boyd said that the "most important thing" he did while with Amtrak was to "establish Amtrak's credibility." He said Amtrak would have been "shot out of the water"if it hadn't established credibility with Congress and the DOT. He said that Amtrak has not yet been given a fair test. A fair test is having enough "quality equipment" in a period of normal economic activity. The recession has been on since Amtrak's new Superliner equipment got on the rails. He said that one of Amtrak's problems is that it's "subsidized as a company" while other transportation modes are "subsidized as modes." That makes Amtrak a big, visible target of budget-cutters. He said that he thinks most of Amtrak's future growth lies in short or medium-distance "corridors".....

HARTFORD UNION STATION is to be transformed into an intermodal transportation center. At its Sep 15 meeting, the Amtrak Board of Directors approved spending funds for Amtrak's share of the refurbishing work. Construction is to begin soon...

THE "CANADIAN'S" MENUS are of two varieties, used on alternate days, reports reader Howard Thornton. The samples he sends show one day's menu consisting of the following main entrees: Chicken Salad, Salmon Steak, Salisbury Steak, and

Prime Rib Roast (the last at dinner only; all the others are the same for both lunch and dinner). The other day's has Tuna Salad, Fillets of Pickerel, Chicken a la King, and again Prime Rib Roast. Mr. Thornton's travel agency will be offering a Canadian tour in the spring which we'll describe in a forthcoming issue. Last spring Thornton donated his private car "Soonerland" to the Kirkpatrick Center, an Oklahoma City museum.....

IOWA GROUND TRANSPORTATION Directory is published by the Iowa Association of RR Passengers, a NARP affiliate, and is available at a cost of $1 from Jaran Enterprises, Box 356, Cresco IA 52136 (checks payable to IARP).....

★ ★ ★

DEL MONTE REVIVAL: An addendum to the article on page 11: The Sep 17 meeting of the revival planners in Monterey revealed some cheery news. July 1 is the target date for startup of the Monterey-San Francisco train. The SP is quite favorable to running it. SP's Rob Krebs and three state legislators were aboard a rail-van that inspected the route on Sep 14. SP is to begin track rehabilitation in October, under contract from Caltrans, which has $2.5 million budgeted for the work. Caltrans will seek $1.2 million next year for operating subsidies. The trip is planned to take just under three hours. A projected schedule has a train leaving Monterey at 6:50am Mon-Fri (4pm Sat & Sun). On Fri a second train would leave at 7pm. San Francisco departure would be 4pm Mon-Fri but 8am Sat & Sun, with a second train leaving Sun at 8pm. The Monterey station will be relocated east of the present site and will be a multi-modal transport center. Other stations on the line will be rehabilitated. Stops are planned at Seaside, Fort Ord/Marina, Castroville, Watsonville, Gilroy, Morgan Hill, two in San Jose, Palo Alto, Burlingame and two in San Francisco (Market St. and 4th & Townsend).....

★ ★ ★

AMTRAK PRESIDENT CLAYTOR told the Board of Directors meeting on Sep 15 that in the dining changes coming soon there would be a return to stainless steel cutlery, in place of plastic (tho china plates will not return). Claytor doesn't like bread that's cooked in microwave ovens, and so he hopes to change that practice. Said he: "When you cook bread in microwaves it turns into something that tastes like a wet paper towel. We'll get toaster ovens so that we can do something decent".....

AMTRAK'S FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE was also discussed by Claytor at the Board meeting. He noted that August ridership was down only 5% systemwide (that compares with 8.6% in July--see complete figures last issue; August figures are not available yet), and revenues were 18% higher than Aug 1981. Claytor found these results very encouraging. In August, Amtrak's costs were kept $19 million, or 14.7% under budget, so the rail corporation definitely will achieve the required 50% revenue to cost ratio, and in fact better than that.....

★ ★ ★

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE study of Amtrak of July 14, reported on here earlier, gets a thoro-going analysis by NARP in its latest newsletter (August). NARP points out that "Much of the study's analysis centers on this fallacy: 'The last ten years have seen major improvements in Amtrak service...' Actually, on the long-distance trains, service quality generally declined throughout the 1970's and picked up only as new and rebuilt equipment was widely distributed during 1980. (The last steamheated trainset was only retired in Mar. '82.)" NARP, like RTN, wonders what the motivation was for producing this apparently unrequested report at this time when there's less controversy over Amtrak in Congress than at any time in its history. But upcoming legislators might be taken in by it. NARP warns, "Amtrak's most enthusiastic enemies may be those newly elected this fall with no interest in public transport. Do your best to see that such people are not elected!".....

"PORTLAND, OR is the Northern hub of Amtrak service providing connections to California, Idaho and the mid-west" says Amtrak's current system timetable. Notes a Northwestern rail supporter wryly, "Quite a switch from a decade ago, when Amtrak didn't even know where Portland was. Portland generated more rail trips than Seattle in years before Amtrak, but it took them a long time to learn that"...

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA station was closed down on Sep 13 because of fumes drifting from a nearby chemical company fire. The city police department would not permit the two CRESCENTS to stop there. It closed the station and evacuated station personnel. Passengers to and from the CRESCENT were detoured thru the city's Greyhound station, with the trains stopping at Sugar Creek Road Crossing to load and unload passengers to a Greyhound bus used as a shuttle.....

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JAPAN SHOULDN'T BUILD its Bullet Train line, some Americans recommended at the time the Japanese were planning it, NARP pointed out in its August newsletter. Maybe they were some of the same people who keep trying to cut back on the revival of American rail passenger service now.....

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION special train, with technical NEC lectures given enroute, will run Washington-Boston on Oct 16, leaving at 9:15am. The APTA convention is being held in Boston this year.....

RONALD C. SHECK'S executive summary of his "Amtrak 90" study is available free from the author if you send a 9x12 self-addressed envelope with $1.05 postage (for third class--10 ounces) to: Ronald C. Sheck, Dept of Earth Sciences, Box 3 AB, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces NM 88003. The full study should be out in the spring.....

"RAILROADS IN THE AMERICAN WEST" is a ond-day Extension program being given at University of California, Los Angeles on Oct 16, taught by Ira Fistell, rail historian and radio broadcaster. For info, call (213) 825-9971 or 9981.....

FALL FOLIAGE TRIP received too late for Rail Fantrips: private car Lehigh Valley 353 on rear of ADIRONDACK to Montreal and return Sep 25-26, arranged by Lehigh Black Diamond Ltd. The car goes only to and from Rouses Point, as current regulations prohibit private cars from entering Canada on that route.....

SAMUEL E. HELLENBRAND was elected vice-chairman of the Amtrak Board at its Sep 15 meeting.....

News in this issue is updated thru Sep 28, 1982.

NORTH STAR (continued from page 7)

Amtrak agreed with the Senator's contention that the accounting assumptions were unfair to extremely short distance trains, and verified that the NORTH STAR had been overcharged for maintenance. Maintenance expenses were recalculated for the NORTH STAR and three other routes in a similar circumstance, and determined that the NORTH STAR was entitled to a reimbursement sufficient to fund operation of the train thruout the rest of this year. Governor Quie agreed to use the reimbursement to maintain service on the NORTH STAR thru the remainder of his term as Governor. This will enable Minnesota's next Governor to make an independent decision on the future of state support for the train.

The train will also run daily during the Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks. The amount of reimbursement from Amtrak will be approximately $100,000. There is no budget, however, for local advertising or sales promotion to counteract all the "last run" media hype that followed the Labor Day discontinuance. As of noon on Sep 15, the train was not yet back in the Arrow reservation system, and local Amtrak officials had been ordered to refer all inquiries to Corporate Communications in Chicago. Calls for reservations were already coming in on the 15th, and ticket agents could not handle them because according to Arrow there was no such train.

(Information from Andy Selden.)

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Two alternatives for Amtrak seem to be most frequently discussed. One is essentially a continuation of the status quo. While it emphasizes cost-cutting measures in operation of the system for a slow, gradual financial improvement, it also requires high subsidies for a long time. The other alternative, the one that has been frequently practiced by federal budget makers, is to rapidly reduce subsidies by cutting back the system. Neither alternative is politically very attractive. It is clear that greater fiscal responsibility in government spending makes high subsidy requirements increasingly unpalatable. The cutback alternative means some areas lose service entirely, as happened in 1979 and 1981...

"Amtrak 90: A Route to Success offers another alternative--a far-reaching, comprehensive plan that not only will establish a truly nationwide rail passenger system by the end of this decade, or by 1990, but also that will turn Amtrak into a profitable system that can stand on its own financially and provide the United States with a quality intercity rail passenger system."

--From introduction to Amtrak 90: A Route to Success, Executive Summary, by Ronald C. Sheck, July, 1982.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"CONNERSVILLE (UPI)--For 150 volunteer crew members, the 34-mile trip to Metamora and back on the Whitewater Valley Railroad is a passion.

"...The railroad association owns all its riding stock--the term given to freight and passenger cars. Some of its locomotives are considered quite rare, including a standard gauge steam locomotive less than 54 inches between the rails.

"...The steam locomotive pulls a tinderbox full of water and hot coals behind the engine. That's where the steam comes from.

"The engineer mans the throttle, reverses the lever and the brakes. ..."

--UPI release in The Times (Frankfort IN) Aug 16.

(The whole railroad sounds quite rare.)

CARS & CONSISTS

*CRESCENT, train 19, Charlottesville VA Sep 2: engines 325, 328; cars 1365, 1143, 4648, 4614, 4636, 4741, 4634, 4706, 4737, 8512, 3102, 2917 "Pacific Island", 2932 "Pacific Shore", 2980 "Pine Creek", SR office car 5.

*N&W "Centennial Limited", Lynchburg VA Sep 4: (Roanoke to Norfolk) N&W J class 611, N&W tender, N&W aux. tender, N&W 1407 tool car, N&W 533, N&W 501, 1210 "John M. Hancock" (ex-N&W, ex-WAB, ex-B&M), SR 843, SR 845 (coaches), 727 "Fort Mitchell" (coach-souvenir car; ex-CofGA bag-coach), 1220 "Carol W. Jensen" (dorm-dounter diner, ex-GN "Devil's Lake"), N&W 1069 "Missionary Ridge", N&W 536, N&W 539, N&W 531, N&W 540, N&W 451 "Hollins College" (12-4 slpr), 3305 "Mardi Gras" (tavern-obs, ex-IC). Same, Sep 5: engines N&W 8055, N&W 8056 (Norfolk to Crewe VA); N&W 1748 (SD45), N&W 1508 (SD35) (Crewe-Roanoke) replacing 611, tenders & tool car; 611 derailed and could not be turned; 611 backed to Roanoke at 20mph for next day. (Sep 6 equipment same as Sep 4.)

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 1, Phoenix Sep 19-21 (stranded by strike): engines 703 & 704; cars 1236, 39936, 31041, 32031, 38037, 34072, 34086, 33001, 32024. Same, San Antonio Sep 4: engines SP 7860, SP 8286, Atk 243; cars 1170, 39927, 31034, 32018, 38021, 39944, 34004, 39945, 34063, 33016, 32024 (last 3 from Chicago)

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, Portland Sep 6: engines 206, 284; cars 1154, 39929, 31020, 31042, 34083, 34049, 33021, 38020, 32042, 32048.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 48, Sep 11 (location unknown:) engines 341, 263; cars 1614,4001,4637, 4647, 4639, 4020, 3101, 8526, 2432, 2085, 2444 "Magnolia Grove", 4604, 4644, 4602, 1271. (Sleepers now near center of train.)

RAIL FANTRIPS

Oct 9 & 10: Historic Pullman house tour. 16-sq block town of Pullman, now a district of Chicago, was founded by Geo. Pullman as a planned industrial community. $7 donation. 660-1276. 11am-5pm, betw Langley, Cottage Grove Aves, 111th&115th Sts

Oct 10: Gold Rush Railroadiana Show & Sale, Sacramento CA Convention Center 10am-5pm. 1mi to Sacto RR Museum. Dealer info: Chas. Miller, 3106 N Rochester St., Arlington VA 22213. (703) 536-2954.

Oct 16 & 17: Fall Foliage Excursions on NY, Susquehanna & Western, Utica-Norwich NY RT. Many domes; motive power: CEN 420's or 430; open-window coach, snack car. $28. U&MV Chap, NRHS, Union Station, Utica NY 13501. 797-2550.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

EXPRESS ADS

VIA RAIL CANADA, AMTRAK, EURAIL PASS, 20th CENTURY RAIL TOURS - tickets and reservations - WE KNOW HOW! One call does it all. Pay by credit card or check. Tickets mailed directly to you. Contact GREAT WESTERN TOURS, masters of rail travel, Sheraton Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994.

It's handy! THE Amtrak Law--Robert J. Swan/Box 1866/Long Beach CA 90801, $30.

DINING CAR CHINA, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports. Many railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, KS 67213. Will buy items.

Be with it! Robert J. Swan's AMTRAK LAW, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801, $30.

CONFUSED BY PHILLY'S RAIL SYSTEMS? Let Delaware Valley Rails make order out of chaos. 192 pages of maps, photos, facts. $11.50 (Pennsylvanians, add 69¢ tax). $12.50 outside U.S. John R. Pawson, Box 411, Willow Grove, PA 19090.

Guess and booboo? NOT with RJSwan's Amtrak Law, Box 1866/Long Beach CA 90801/$30.

SWISS RAIL TOUR, April 15-23, 1983, from New York City. Write: Rail/Road Tours, Hyde Park Travel Bureau, P.O. Box 24, Hyde Park, MA 02136.

To HELP the process, first LEARN the Amtrak Law. It's HANDY to be SURE!

"ISSUES IN AMERICAN RAIL TRAVEL", RTN's little book on important problems with America's rail passenger revival, is almost ready for publication. Price will be $4.50, which includes relevant tax & postage. Full details will be given later in RTN. Rail Travel News, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

THE PANIC BOX (continued from page 10)

6-23 Corridor train 157 hit & injured trespasser west of Market; delay 48".

6-24 CARDINAL: Chessie frt derail't west of Peru IN; #51(23) terminated Peru, psgrs bused (was 193" late due to bad switch & to frt derail west of Charleston WV). #50(25) originated at Peru, psgrs bused from Chicago. #50 (23) 124" late at Washington (due to sun kink west of Hamilton OH & slow orders), terminated and psgrs transferred to CRESCENT #20(23).

6-24 EAGLE #22(22) hit tractor trailer at New Braunfels TX; employee injured back on diner steps. Delay 110". Consist: 329, cars 32064, 33002, 34064, 31032; all equipment received some damage.

6-24 Metroliner unit 814 (train # unknown) blew a transformer at 6:50pm with PCB spill on right of way three catenary pole lengths long.
6-26 EMPIRE BUILDER: BN frt derail't at Yellepit WA, 16mis west of Pasco; train 28(26) delayed 231", was to take UP detour, but track opened.
6-26 Corridor train 95 terminated east of Midway (see RTN #247 & letter in 248).
6-27 COAST STARLIGHT #14(27) & 11(26) & SPIRIT OF CALIF #18(27) on Burbank Branch after SP frt derail't 24.4 miles west of L.A. #15(26) terminated Oxnard & psgrs bused. Buses got psgrs in about 2hrs late.
6-27 BROADWAY LTD #40&41 detour Chicago-Alliance via Cleveland, CR frt derail't 2 miles west of Fort Wayne.
6-27 Chessie frt derail 17mis east of Connellsville PA. CAPITOL LTD #441(27) backed 14mis to Cumberland to terminate, but track cleared & it left there 183" late; BROADWAY #41 held Pittsburgh for #441 150".
6-27 Train 484 annulled Schenectady-Albany due to cab signal failure on Turbo equipment 156, 178, 174, 187, 163.
6-27 NORTH STAR #10 stalled at Andover MN, engine 302 probs; BN unit 6769 took it to Minneapolis 72" late.
6-27 CRESCENT #20(27) engine probs Anniston, unit 223; SR unit 2715 put on; 97".
6-27 EAGLE #22(25) fire in engine 314 at Marshall TX; MoPac unit 4617 on to Poplar Bluff, then unit 263 on; 90" delay; also delayed 52" west of Longview due to 2000-gal fuel spill burning within 12 feet of railroad.
6-28 CARDINAL #51(27) terminated at Hamilton, psgrs bused; N&W frt derail on Chessie at College Corner IN, east of Cottage Grove.
6-28 ADIRONDACK #69 held 58" at Rouses Point due to D&H frt derail there; also delayed 68" Schenectady-Plattsburgh for maintenance of way work. .
6-28 HOOSIER STATE will detour today thru July 1 due to CR track work;Maynard-Thornton Jct on GTW, L&N Thornton-Yard Center, CW&I Yard Center-So. Branch.
6-28 SF ZEPHYR #5(27) delayed 77" Albia IA, BN patrolling due to heavy rains.
6-28 CRESCENT #20 delayed 84" New Orleans, HEP problem with car 1622, removed.
6-28 CR frt stalled at Ft. Wayne Jct, delayed SW LTD #4(26) 68", #3(28) 14", BLUE WATER LTD #364(28) 38". BN unit pushed freight into the clear.
6-29 Corridor train 185 terminated 6mis n of Wilmington due to broken pantograph shoe, engine 902; then a switch stuck at Holly, delaying 10 other Atk trains and seven Conrail trains from 2 to 58mins.
6-29 SUNSET LTD #2(27), with engines SP7355, Atk 714 & 704 &-7 cars, hit auto at E. Bernard TX, fatality; SP7360 subbed for SP7355; delayed 57 mins.
6-29 Metroliner 606 terminated 30th St. Phila. with 2 of 3 units dead.
6-29 SAN DIEGAN #577 delayed 101mins with engine problems, unit 214.
6-30 Corridor train 471 delayed by engine problems, unit 942, then had hot box on 942, terminated at Edgewood, psgrs put on #61(29), delayed 128".
6-30 SUNSET blocked by SP frt derail 5mis east San Antonio; #1(30) terminated Houston & #2(29) San Antonio & turned, psgrs bused between, 2-2½hrs delay. EAGLE's normal change of cars not made, entire train turned San Antonio.
6-29 CRESCENT #19(29) had fire in engine 223at Faber VA (had 2 units, 15 cars); ran on 2nd unit to Danville, where SR 2873 added; delayed 114".
6-30 ADIRONDACKS delayed 1-2½hrs due to track work south of Ft. Ticonderoga NY.
6-30 Axle fell off car 21225 on train 187 south of Winans in NEC; 5 trains delayed 12 to 215"; psgrs transferred to #187 except slpr psgrs from #51.

SPECIAL TRAINS OPERATED IN JUNE:

6-5 to 6-6: Galesburg IL RR Days equipment display train.
6-5: 20th Century RR Days Chicago-Galesburg RT.
6-8: Inspection train on BN Chicago-Omaha.
6-9: Inspection train on CNW Omaha-Chicago. (Car 10,000 used on these two.)
6-12: American Association of Railroaders, St. Louis-Hannibal RT.
6-12: Campaign special Boston-New York RT.
6-13: Mobilization/Survival special New York-Boston.

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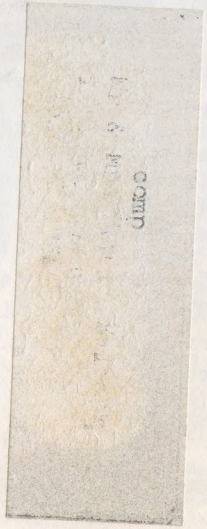

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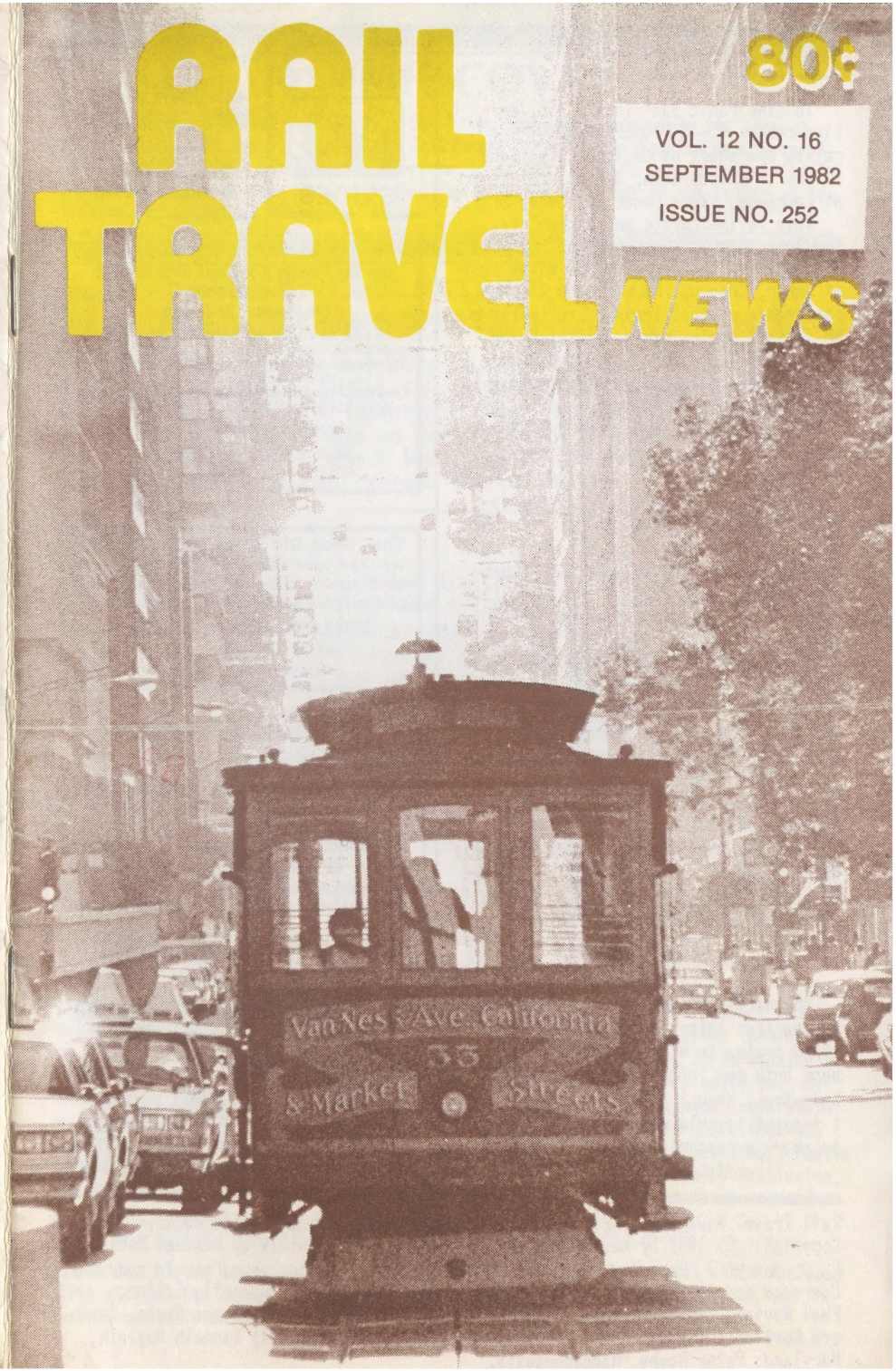
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